

Message Text

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ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

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DRAFTED BY: S/S- RGAMBLE

APPROVED BY: S/S- MR GAMBLE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 225405

NODIS

CHEROKEE, EYES ONLY FOR AMBASSADOR SCHAUFLE

FOL TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE FROM LUSAKA DTD 11 SEPT 1976 QTE

S E C R E T LUSAKA 2383

NODIS/CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR RH ZA

SUBJECT: NKOMO RETURN TO RHODESIA

REF: (A) LUSAKA 2377, (B) LUSAKA 2378

1. CHONA TOLD ME IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE THAT STATE HOUSE (PETER KASANDA) HAD RECEIVED A DIRECT PHONE CALL YESTERDAY FROM THE NUMBER TWO MAN IN THE RHODESIAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE. AFTER CHECKING WITH THE PRESIDENT, THEY DECIDED TO RECEIVE THE CALL THOUGH THEY WOULD HAVE REFUSED TO HAVE RETURNED IT THEMSELVES HAD THE CONNECTION BEEN BROKEN. CHONA DESCRIBED THE INDIVIDUAL AS A PERSON HE KNOWS WELL AND WHO IS SYMPATHETIC.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE CALL WAS TO SEEK ZAMBIAN ASSISTANCE IN PREVAILING UPON NKOMO NOT RETURN TO RHODESIA FOR

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AT LEAST A WEEK.

3. CHONA TOLD ME THERE WAS NO QUESTION BUT THAT THEY WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN DISSUADING NKOMO FROM GOING TO RHODESIA. HE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHY RHODESIAN WERE DISCOURAGING NKOMO'S RETURN TO RHODESIA NEXT WEEK.

4. COMMENT: MANY HERE FEEL NKOMO WAS IN SERIOUS DANGER OF BEING ARRESTED HAD HE RETURNED. IT WAS MY IMPRESSION IN MY CONVERSATION WITH NKOMO LAST WEEK (LUSAKA 2281) THAT HE RECOGNIZED THE POSSIBILITY AND WAS QUITE PREPARED FOR--OR MAY EVEN HAVE WELCOMED--ARREST IN SALISBURY. IT SEEMS POSSIBLE THAT THE RHODESIANS INVOLVED DID NOT WANT NKOMO ARRESTED AT THIS MOMENT. SUCH AN ARREST COULD ONLY HAVE COMPLICATED THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS BEING UNDERTAKEN BY THE SECRETARY. NKOMO'S STRATEGY DEPENDS ON THE FACT THAT HE IS PERHAPS THE BEST KNOWN AMONG THE NATIONALISTS INSIDE OF RHODESIA. WHILE HE HAS DIFFICULTY COMPETING AGAINST THE ATTRACTIVE YOUNGER AND MORE MILITANT NATIONALISTS OF ZANU AND THE THIRD FORCE OUTSIDE RHODESIA. HE SEES HIS POSITION INSIDE RHODESIA AS HIS BEST HOPE FOR PROJECTING HIMSELF INTO LEADERSHIP OF AN INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE. SUCH A STRATEGY IS ALSO REFLECTED IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE YESTERDAY (REF B) IN WHICH HE CRITICIZED THE US FOR PRESSING FOR UNITY AMONG THE NATIONALISTS.

5. PLEASE PASS NAIROBI FOR SCHAUFELLE.
LOW UNQTE KISSINGER

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NNN

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